

Dr. Jim Purcell

Dr. Jim Purcell was named Louisiana's 7th Commissioner of Higher Education in February, 2011. Purcell previously served as the state higher education executive in Arkansas and Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning in Oklahoma before coming to the Board of Regents as Louisiana's top postsecondary education leader.

Having spent more than 25 years on the front lines of education and economic development in five states, Dr. Purcell's core belief is that the key to unlocking the American Dream in every person's life is education. He has experience working in 2-year, 4-year, public and private colleges and universities in five states. Additionally, his extensive efforts in institutional effectiveness include academic program review, academic program development, program entrance requirements, course evaluations, grade distributions, student retention and graduation and student placement.

A review of Dr. Purcell's accomplishments reveals experience in creating and coordinating performance-based funding, legislating the seamless transfer of credits earned in completing AA/AS degrees to four-year public universities, developing a universal scholarship application and implementing strategies designed to identify and assist returning adults who have earned some college credit to complete a degree.

In his role as Commissioner of Higher Education in Louisiana, Dr. Purcell oversees and supervises the operations of the Board of Regents' staff and represents the state's postsecondary education community at the state and federal level as well as the general public. Dr. Purcell will be actively engaged in implementing Louisiana's premier piece of higher education legislation-the Granting Resources and Autonomy for Diplomas (GRAD) Act as well as the Performance-Based Funding Formula.

Dr. Purcell holds a BS in Public Administration from Auburn University, an M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of Montevallo, and an Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Alabama.